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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 TEL AVIV 000969

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

NEA FOR BURNS/SATTERFIELD/DIBBLE;
NEA/SA/EX FOR RICHIE; DEPT FOR DS/IP/ITA; DEPT FOR
DS/IP/NEA;
NSC FOR ABRAMS/DANIN; USAID FOR DCHA, DCHA/FPP, PRM FOR
DEWEY/GREENE

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [KWBG](#) [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [ASEC](#) [CASC](#) [GZ](#) [IS](#)

SUBJECT: WB/G SITREP: FEBRUARY 17, 2005 (1300 HOURS LOCAL)
-- SETTLERS INJURE ITALIAN AND AMCIT NGO ACTIVISTS NEAR
HEBRON

This is a joint ConGen Jerusalem/Embassy Tel Aviv cable.

1. (SBU) Summary: On February 16, settlers west of Hebron attacked a group of Amcit (Christian Peacemakers) and Italian peace activists who were escorting Palestinian shepherds grazing animals, beating up and injuring two activists, according to humanitarian NGOs. PA Labor Minister Ghassan Khatib closed down the Labor Ministry's Jenin office on February 16 after several attacks on the office by Palestinians demanding unemployment benefits. In Khan Yunis, three Palestinians were injured overnight February 16-17 when a bomb they were carrying exploded after IDF soldiers caught sight of them and opened fire. End Summary.

West Bank

2. (SBU) ATTACKS/SECURITY:

-- Deaths: Nil.

-- Injuries: On February 16, settlers west of Hebron attacked a group of Amcit (Christian Peacemakers) and Italian peace activists who were escorting Palestinian shepherds grazing animals, beating up and injuring two activists, according to humanitarian NGOs.

-- Arrests: The IDF entered Nablus and arrested three Fatah activists on February 16, according to Palestinian sources.

3. (SBU) POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS:

-- PA Labor Minister Ghassan Khatib closed down the Labor Ministry's Jenin office on February 16 after several attacks on the office by Palestinians demanding unemployment benefits, according to Palestinian sources.

Gaza

4. (SBU) ATTACKS:

-- Deaths: Nil.

-- Injuries: UNRWA reported that three Palestinians were injured overnight February 16-17 in the Khuza'a area of Khan Yunis, when a bomb they were carrying exploded after IDF soldiers caught sight of them and opened fire.

-- Mortars/Rockets: The IDF did not report any rocket fire overnight February 16-17. UNRWA, however, reported that Palestinian militants fired one Qassam rocket towards Ganei Tel settlement in the early morning hours February 17. No injuries were reported.

-- Shootings: Nil.

5. (SBU) BORDER CROSSINGS:

-- Route Four (Salahadeen Road), the main north-south traffic artery, was open February 17, with a major detour at Netzarim Junction. Abu Khouli remains open for public transportation only; no private vehicles are allowed to cross.

-- Erez Crossing was open for internationals and for a limited number of Palestinians February 16, and 503 laborers and 83 merchants crossed into Israel.

-- The Erez Industrial Zone was partially open February 16, and 305 laborers entered the zone.

-- Sufa Crossing was closed for Palestinian laborers February 17, but was open for the import of aggregates used in

construction.

-- Karni Terminal was partially open February 17.

-- Rafah Terminal was open for arrivals and departures February 17, except for male Palestinians between the ages of 16-35, who were not allowed to cross in either direction.

-- Tel al-Sultan checkpoint was closed February 17. Toufah checkpoint was open for female residents of al-Mowassi, and for male residents under 16 and over 35 years of age.

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